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THE EVOLUTION OF NEO-CONSERVATIVE FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA – FROM THE COLD WAR TO THE NEW MILLENNIUM SELECTED ISSUES

I. THE ORIGINS

1.

The history of American neo-conservatism begins in the 1960s with a group of intellectuals from the liberal camp, who rejected the Cultural Revolution and the radicalism of the New Left. The intellectual leaders of the new movement, Norman Podhoretz and Irving Kristol, as well as their allies and associates Nathan Glazer, Daniel Bell, Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Jeanne Kirkpatrick, among others, were later named "neo-conservatives" or "neocons" to emphasize the difference between "converted" leftist liberals and "regular" republican conservatives (Ehrman 2000: 50––70). Notably, neo-conservatives formed their intellectual *credo* from the elements of many doctrines – including the thought of Hannah Arendt, Reinhold Niebuhr, Walter Lippman, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and Leo Strauss. In general, they shared the view of the whole conservative camp, that the social crisis of the 1960s and 1970s was deepened by the counterculture, which undermined the Judeo-Christian tradition in America and infected the roots of American society. The "regular" and "neo" conservatives commonly believed that American society had been weakened by the effects of industrialization and suffered from the erosion of social relations, caused by the leftist-liberal campaign against religion and family. In matters of foreign policy the early neo-conservatives defended containment and anticommunism, strongly supported the alliance between America and Israel and raised the significance of moral issues in international policy (Podhoretz 1986, Kristol 1999, Ehrman 2000, Friedman 2005, Tokarski 2006).

It is to say, that a clear definition of the neo-conservative doctrine was not set even by its Founding Fathers. As Norman Podhoretz explained in one of his interviews:

> Neo-conservative means new conservative. We neo-conservatives were new in the sense that we had all begun somewhere on the left — radical, liberal, whatever — but somewhere on the left. So we were new to conservatism. But we also brought something new to conservatism. It was a different kind of conservatism. I want to get that clear, though I can't go into what was new about it as conservatism" (Podhoretz, Kreisler 1999).

The differences between neo-conservatives and the proponents of traditional republican conservatism – Russel Kirk, William Buckley Jr., Clinton Rossiter, Peter Viereck – including the leaders of the New Right, were based on their political and ideological roots. Historically, the postwar American conservatism remained an ideology of individual success, free market and limited federal prerogatives; in the matters of foreign policy some members of its political base – the Republican Party – leaned toward isolationism. As Russel Kirk clarified, American conservatism originates from the philosophy of Edmund Burke, John Adams, Irving Babbit, George Santayana. The conservative philosophy was formed on a belief in the Judeo-Christian core of Western civilization and a concept of natural law; it opposes any utopian models of society and radical approach towards key issues of public life (Kirk 2001: 8–9).

However, after the long presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt some members of the conservative camp revised their view on internal and external affairs, moving closer to the main streams of American politics and adapting most popular elements of the liberal agenda. The liberals – gathered around the Democratic Party – held strong support for their ideals of expanding the prerogatives of the federal government in order to reduce economic, social and ethnic imbalances. The liberal agenda – i.e. social security policy, progressive tax rate, public health service – was inspired by the concept of a welfare state, based on Gunnar Myrdal and John Maynard Keynes's economic theory. While Roosevelt's popularity made it difficult to question liberal influences and the appealing ideal of a welfare state, many Republicans abandoned *laissez-faire* rhetoric, accepting the expanded role of the government in social policy (Osiatyński 1984, Skarżyński 1998, Scruton 2002, Stępień 2003).[1]

The proponents of the traditional understanding of conservatism started to rebuild their influence in the 1950s, invigorated by such intellectuals as Russel Kirk, William Buckley Jr., Robert Nisbet, Pieter Viereck and others. The new wave of conservatism, reinforced by the philosophy of Friedrich von Hayek and the economic theory of Milton Friedman, gradually grew in strength under the banners of the New Right movement, finally achieving a decisive influence on American politics in the 1980s (Rusher 1984, Nisbet 1986, Kirk 2001).

2.

In the late 1960s riots against the war in Vietnam, as well as social and ethnic conflicts, strengthened the left wing of the Democratic Party, connected with the New Left movement. The New Left (including Students for a Democratic Society) subscribed to the theory of moral equivalence, based on the conclusion that the United

[1] This reformed Republican agenda evolved after Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon's presidencies into *social* (or *compassionate*) conservatism.

States had no right to condemn communist regimes, being responsible for war crimes in Vietnam and "neo-colonial" policy in Latin America. The growing influence of leftist organizations on the Democratic Party changed its view on the matters of foreign policy. Consequently, many Democrats abandoned *containment*, anticommunism, democracy promotion and the Wilsonian "crusades for freedom" – supported by the Democratic Party during the postwar period – and moved towards isolationism. After the failure of Hubert Humphrey's presidential campaign in 1968, the divisions among Democrats broadened. While leftist Democrats supported George McGovern – a symbolic figure of the anti-war movement – the proponents of traditional anticommunist foreign policy gathered around Henry "Scoop" Jackson. In the same circle were democratic hawks, descending from Trockyist and socialist movements of the 1940s and 50s. One of these activists was Norman Podhoretz, an editor of *The Commentary* and a co-founder of neo-conservatism. Podhoretz, a member of the leftist Peace Movement in the 1950s, became disillusioned with radical ideology by the late 1960s, when riots, violence on campuses and the anti-Semitism of black radicals pushed him towards conservatism (Ehrman 2000: 55–65, Tindall, Shi 2002).

The rapid expansion of neoconservatives would not have been possible without the journals, which became their public voice – *The Commentary*[2] and *The Public Interest*.[3] In the early 1970s Podhoretz – as *The Commentary*'s columnist – attacked the ideals of the New Left and vowed against the "soft" American foreign policy of *détente*; in the matters of foreign policy *The Commentary*'s contributors were lobbying also for stronger American support for Israel, especially after the Jom Kippur war in 1973. *The Public Interest*'s contributors – Nathan Glazer, Daniel Bell[4] and Daniel Patrick Moynihan – created the foundations for the neo-conservative social and political agenda (Bell 1994). Irving Kristol himself – a former Trockyist and member of the IVth *Internationale* – shared a belief that America's potential determined its role as a global guardian of law and justice. Nevertheless, in matters of foreign policy Kristol remained close to traditional realism and rejected the vision of democratic "crusades" (Kristol 1999: 75–91, Ehrman 2000).

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[2] *The Commentary* (a monthly) was founded in 1945 by the American Jewish Committee. Since the very beginning it covered wide variety of subjects. First focused mostly on culture and Jewish issues, in following years *The Commentary* broadened its profile, publishing analysis of politics, foreign affairs and society. Finally, as *The Commentary* editors claim today, the monthly became vitally engaged in the preservation and spread of democracy and Western values. See www.commentarymagazine.com

[3] A quarterly *The Public Interest* was founded in 1965 by Irving Kristol (it was published until April 2005). The quarterly's profile varied from domestic political and social issues to international affairs; later it covered also matters of science and technology. Its contributors were the sociologists Nathan Glazer and Daniel Bell, the economists Milton Friedman and Robert Solow and acclaimed authors Charles Murray and James Q. Wilson. Since the very beginning *The Public Interest* aspired to the role of a high-profile source of information for scholars and journalists.

[4] In his acclaimed analyses Daniel Bell described the transformation of modern industrial society and the rise of the new era – the age of rapid technological development and post-industrial economy, which inspired the next generation of neo-conseratives such as F. Fukuyama.

II. "HAWKS" AND *DÉTENTE*

1.

In the 1970s many ideological debates between neo-conservatives and the New Left were focused on the war in Vietnam. Norman Podhoretz often warned his followers that the military failure in Vietnam caused the growth of isolationism and other dangerous tendencies in American public life, including a deep change in the public attitude towards communism. As Podhoretz exaggerated in one of his articles, before the war in Vietnam Democrats were still eager to support *containment*, but in 1972 their leader George McGovern supported isolationism; Podhoretz also compared the isolationist tendencies of the 1970s and 1930s, concluding that Kissinger's *détente* resembled Chamberlain's *appeasement*, expressing the concern that American weakness had become a threat to Israel, Japan and Western Europe, while Soviet expansionist ambitions and their increased military capabilities undermined America's global leadership (Podhoretz 1976).

At the time the leader of the neo-conservatives shared the view of those foreign policy experts, who were warning of the growing Soviet threat, such as Richard Pipes and Paul Nitze. While the proponents of *détente* and isolationism believed in the coexistence of two ideological blocs, Podhoretz challenged their arguments as an example of wishful thinking. If not entirely defeated, expansive communism would remain a threat for democracies – Podhoretz argued. Consequently, the neo-conservative thinker turned to the Wilsonian idea of promoting freedom and democracy, concluding that it had become inevitable "to use American power to make the world safe for democracy" (Podhoretz 1976: 40).

In the late 1970s similar arguments were raised by Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Joshua Muravchik and Daniel Patrick Moynihan. At the time Moynihan – who had gained large popularity as the American ambassador to the United Nations – was the only member of the neo-conservative circle with a significant influence on U.S. foreign policy. In early 1976 Moynihan resigned from his post (under pressure of Gerald Ford's Secretary of State Henry Kissinger), though his 8 months at the U.N. had opened up for him a means to further his political career, as one of the important proponents of improving the rank of democracy and human rights agenda in U.S. foreign policy. Shortly after leaving diplomacy Moynihan successfully entered the Senate from New York; Norman Podhoretz was a member of Moynihan's staff. Notably, Moynihan remained an important ally of the neo-conservatives until the early 1980s (Ehrman 2000).

During Gerald Ford's presidency neo-conservatives found themselves on the same side as the Republican "hawks": Ronald Reagan, Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney and George H.W. Bush (Bell 1977, p. 203). These two factions rejected *détente*, demanding a return to the "straight" anticommunist foreign policy. Hawkish republicans shared a similar view of global matters as the "old school" Democrats, gathered around Henry "Scoop" Jackson (among others Jackson's assistant Richard Perle, Paul Nitze and Paul Wolfowitz). During Jimmy Carter's presidency the links

between neo-conservatives and hard-line republicans were maintained, while those two factions strongly opposed Carter's "soft" foreign policy.

2.

According to Andrzej Mania, Carter's foreign policy was stretched between the strategy of saving *détente* and the idea of promoting human rights, treated as the key element of international politics (Mania 2003: 137–161). As Andrzej Mania concluded, Carter considered himself a continuator of Wilsonian idealism and believed in the special role of America as the guardian of moral principles; the president's vision was to a large extent based on his religious beliefs (Mania 2003: 146). Accordingly, human rights became an important new factor of American foreign policy in this period, being used by the democratic administration as proof of its high moral standards. Notably, the significance of humanitarian issues had been emphasized even earlier by the Congress (the amendment to Foreign Assistance Act reorganized U.S. foreign aid in favor of human rights promotion). The Carter administration followed Congress' attempts to implement a human rights agenda to bilateral relations, as well as Congress' engagement in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Mania 2003: 142–143).

In spite of the efforts of Carter's administration, American foreign policy of the late 1970s seemed to many observers unclear and ineffective. Carter's human rights policy was criticized as partisan and inconsistent, while it was subordinated to U.S. strategic interests and significance of the country, in which human rights were abused (Mania 2003: 158–161). One of the most important critics of Carter's approach to international affairs was Jeanne Kirkpatrick – a professor of political science at Georgetown University. Kirkpatrick rejected Carter's human rights policy as well as Zbigniew Brzezinski's theory of international relations. In the renowned article "Dictatorship and Double Standards" Kirkpatrick claimed that Carter's cabinet members, fascinated by a vision of a new "technotronic" era in human history, utterly ignored political facts. "So what if the 'deep historical forces' at work in such diverse places as Iran, the Horn of Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America and the United Nations look a lot like Russians or Cubans" – Kirkpatrick argued (Kirkpatrick 1979: 40). According to the neo-conservative analyst, Jimmy Carter used double standards, because he ignored human rights abuse in the Soviet bloc, while – at the same time – the U.S. State Department put unreasonable pressure on America's authoritarian allies, Reza Pahlavi of Iran and Nicaragua's leader Somoza. According to Kirkpatrick, as a result of this "schizophrenic" policy America lost valuable allies, while the purpose of ending the Cold War remained merely an illusion (Kirkpatrick 1979).

The neo-conservative rejection of Carter's foreign policy was based also on the analyses of other important experts – Walter Laquer, a historian warning of growing Soviet influence in Europe, and Edward N. Luttwak – an expert on arms control from Johns Hopkins University. As Laquer pointed out, Western Europe, weakened by the oil crises of the early 1970s and local communist parties, was dangerously close to falling under Soviet domination. Shattered transatlantic links and Carter's

new *appeasement* policy were leading to "finlandization" of entire Western Europe, Laquer argued (Laquer 1977). According to Luttwak, who strongly opposed Carter's defense policy, SALT's failure was caused by Soviet hostile intentions. America hoped for the end of military competition, but the Soviets used SALT as another element in a global game against the United States, trying to avoid all obligations (Luttwak 1974). Similarly, historian Richard Pipes argued that the very nature of Marxism-Leninism and the Soviet system left no place for harmonious coexistence with the West. The *détente* policy was an attempt to build an equally-balanced international system with peaceful cooperation instead of an arms race. Nevertheless – as Pipes suggested – the whole history of Russia since the Tsars until Brezhniev exposed its expansionist and militarist nature. The Soviets' final aim was world domination and a global social revolution. Therefore, all negotiations, disarmament agreements and *détente* were merely the USSR's temporary tactics (Pipes 1980).

Another point of contention between neo-conservatives and Carter was the U.S. Middle East policy and the issue of American aid for Israel, which caused a lot of strife within the Democratic Party. Neo-conservatives expressed their strong support for Israel, promoting a policy of broadening the American sphere of influence in the Middle East (Luttwak 1974 and 1975). A conflict between Carter and American Jewish circles was caused to some extent by the president's close relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia; Carter's "pro-Arab" policy was one of the reasons for neo-conservatives" support for Ronald Reagan. In the early 1980 Norman Podhoretz, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Elliot Abrams and other key neo-conservatives gathered in Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM), a think tank founded in 1972 by sen. Henry Jackson. CDM's aim was to increase American military power, under the banner Peace through Strength. In 1980 the members of the neo-conservative faction tried to win the democratic nomination for D.P. Moynihan, who was finally forced to support Carter. Knowing that they had no chance to reach their goals in foreign policy with Jimmy Carter and having no powerful friends among democratic leaders, neo-conservatives joined the republican candidate Ronald Reagan; at the same time they finally left the Democratic Party (Ehrman 2000: 132–151).

III. REAGAN'S GLADIATORS

1.

During the Reagan presidency neo-conservatives had their first opportunity to put their vision of foreign policy into practice. Neo-conservatives in the new administration – Ambassador to the UN Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle and Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Elliot Abrams – shaped significantly Reagan's democracy promotion agenda, including "Crusade for Freedom" and National Endowment for Democracy.[5] Reagan's democratic offen-

[5] *The National Endowment for Democracy* (NED), founded in 1983 as a private institution with federal funding, was formed to fulfill Reagan's plan of fostering the infrastructure of democracy. An idea of a bipartisan institution devoted to human rights promotion was raised

sive, inspired by the anticommunist crusade of the 1950s, Wilsonianism and Carter's human rights agenda, was strongly influenced by Jeanne Kirkpatrick, responsible for the international image of Reagan's administration; Kirkpatrick had the mission to rebuild America's prestige as a global democracy and human rights proponent (Kirkpatrick 1989). Neo-conservative officials and activists – Carl Gershman,[6] Elliot Abrams, Joshua Muravchik, Vin Weber, Francis Fukuyama and Michael Novak also controlled the National Endowment for Democracy, which became one of Reagan's "tools" in his anticommunist campaign (Carothers 1999: 30–33, Schweizer 2004: 201––210, Ehrman 2000). Another important neo-conservative official in Reagan's administration, Elliot Abrams, who took charge of the Latin America and human rights issues, participated in NED's Project for Democracy in Central America (PRODEMCA), a semi-military initiative, which was often described as a symbol of Reagan's interventionist and imperialist policy towards Latin America. Abrams's activity aimed at weakening the leftist regimes of Latin America, e.g. in Cuba, Salvador, Nicaragua, which included the support for Sandinista "Contras" (Ehrman 2000: 170–174).[7]

Notably, neo-conservatives took advantage of growing opportunities in the Reagan era, developing think tanks and lobbyist groups, many of which gained influence in the area of foreign policy. Midge Decter's Committee for the Free World (CFW), founded in 1981, was based on the Committee for the Present Danger and Coalition for Democratic Majority's experiences from the 1970s. The Committee for the Free World's aim was to shatter Soviet influence by media campaigns and scholarship programs, as well as by revealing Soviet plots in America. Some of the Committee for the Free World's contributors were Richard V. Allen (Reagan's foreign policy advisor), Michael Ledeen (Col. North's cooperative from the National Security Council), Richard Perle and Jeanne Kirkpatrick. Decter's committee provided friendly media comments on U.S. military actions in Salvador, Nicaragua and Grenada. Among other important growing conservative institutions there were also the High Frontier, the Center for Security Policy, Empower America, the Institute on Religion and Democracy, the Institute on Religion and Public Life. From the same ideological background originated the Ethics and Public Policy Center (EPPC), devoted to promoting an increased role of religion in public life. EPPC's key figures were Ernest Lefever, Elliot Abrams, William Kristol, Jeanne Kirkpatrick and Richard Neuhaus (Ehrman 2000).

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much earlier. In the late 1970s Dante Fascell, Donald Fraser and Lee Atwater worked on this project, which resulted in the National Endowment for Democracy's predecessor – the American Political Foundation. The American Political Foundation was headed by Allen C. Weinstein, closely related to the neo-conservatives.

[6] Carl Gershman – NED's president since April 1984, was a former trockyist social democrat of Max Schachtman's faction, who had joined Henry Jackson's ring in the early 1970s; Gershman was also an assistant to Ambassador Kirkpatrick.

[7] The latter issue shattered Abrams's political career – he was charged (with Colonel Oliver North) in the Iran-Contras case.

Though many neo-conservatives influenced Reagan's foreign policy, its Founding Father was not satisfied with Reagan's achievements in the Cold War. According to Podhoretz, the president failed to fulfill his previous promises, being "too soft" in matters of U.S-Soviet relations. The examples of Reagan's "softness" were, for example, lifting the embargo on grain export to the USSR and a relatively gentle policy towards the Polish government after its campaign against the "Solidarity" movement. As Podhoretz argued, a fiasco of Reagan's Soviet policy was caused by its inconsistency – after lifting the embargo, the U.S. administration failed to persuade European allies to stop the construction of a pipeline from the USSR to Western Europe (Podhoretz 1982).

In the mid-1980s Podhoretz remained the most "hawkish" of all anticommunist hawks in the American political arena. However, during the times of *perestroika* and the process of ending the Cold War, Podhoretz's anticommunist radicalism could be seen as an anachronism. *The Commentary's* columnist seemed to ignore a profound change in the Soviet bloc and in global politics, which pushed a group of neocons led by Irving Kristol to create a new quarterly, focused on foreign affairs – *The National Interest*.[8] While *The National Interest* columnists – Robert Tucker, Henry Rowen and others – focused on American foreign priorities in a changing international system, describing the decline of Soviet power as a process that could not be stopped by domestic reforms, Podhoretz paid more attention to Israeli-Arab issues, demanding increased U.S. support for Tel-Aviv.

One of the most significant contributions of the *The National Interest* circle was "The End of History?" by Francis Fukuyama (Fukuyama 1989). As Fukuyama pointed out, the ideological and political failure of the USSR symbolized the final triumph of liberal democracy. Fukuyama's theory originated from Friedrich Hegel philosophy of history; the victory of Western liberal democracy proved its obvious advantage over all other imaginable political systems – Fukuyama argued. Consequently, humanity finished its quest for the most perfect form of government, fulfilling a base human need of being socially accepted. "The End of History?" was largely discussed because of its radicalism, but also for the author's accurate vision of the USSR's final collapse. The discussions over Fukuyama's essay proved also the importance of TNI and its contributors in the matters of foreign policy. The success of *The National Interest* also showed the growing role of a new generation of neo-conservatives – Francis Fukuyama, Charles Krauthammer, William Kristol, Owen Harries and Joshua Muravchik.

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[8] *The National Interest* (TNI), founded in 1985, became the voice of a new generation of neo-conservatives. Among *The National Interest* contributors were Robert Tucker, Edward Luttwak, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Owen Harries, Henry Rowen, Francis Fukuyama.

IV. FROM THE *UNIPOLAR MOMENT TO BENEVOLENT HEGEMONY*

1.

In 1989–1990 neo-conservatives were divided into circles that shared different visions of foreign policy – neo-realist and unilateralist. The differences between these two visions were particularly harsh during the discussions of NATO enlargement, the war in Yugoslavia, the role of the UN, democracy promotion, and China-Taiwan relations. Nevertheless, none of the leading neo-conservatives abandoned the vision of America's global leadership, opposing the neo-isolationist ideology of Patrick Buchanan. The neo-realist concept of U.S. foreign policy was promoted mostly by contributors to *The National Interest* – Owen Harries and Robert Tucker. As these analysts argued, a new American doctrine for the post-Cold War period should respond to the evolution from a bipolar system to a traditional multipolarity, based on a relative balance between global powers. According to the neo-conservative realists, the vision of exporting democracy and idealist crusades should be subordinated to the international strategy which would protect America from the effect of imperial outstretch, described by Paul Kennedy; a realist American policy would allow other powers to build its spheres of influence. Consequently, a newly formed multipolar world system would replace the Cold War's bipolar balance, bringing peaceful cooperation, global development and friendship. This doctrine opposed the imperial dreams of *Pax Americana* and hegemonic unilateralism (Harries and Lind 1993/1994, Tucker 1998).

However, a more important contribution for the neo-conservative agenda in the new era was the geopolitical vision of Charles Krauthammer – a columnist of *The New Republic*.[9] Krauthammer rejected the concept of bipolarity being succeeded by multipolarity. His hegemonic doctrine of unilateral global policy described America as an effective world leader – a sole superpower, which should protect its privileged position in order to provide peace and global security. According to Krauthammer, after the collapse of the USSR America became a power that could not be equalled by any other in the foreseeable future. This unique unipolar system was meant to last until Americans were capable of keeping their privileged position. While in the 1990s all other powers – China, Germany, Russia, Japan – were much weaker than America on all grounds, the main threat for U.S. security and leadership was a proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and dangerous dictators (e.g. Saddam Hussein) – Krauthammer argued (Krauthammer 1990/1991).

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[9] *The New Republic* (weekly) founded in 1914, focused on politics, foreign affairs and culture. Among its contributors were Walter Lippman, H.G. Wells, George Orwell, Reinhold Niebuhr and Hannah Arendt. In the early years *The New Republic* supported Theodore Roosevelt and the progressive movement. Then it moved towards centre-left and socialist ideology. After World War II *The New Republic* became liberal; in the 1970s critical of both Vietnam and the New Left. In 1975 with the new owner Martin Peretz *The New Republic* changed its political line. In the 1980s the weekly supported Reagan in his anticommunist policy; *The New Republic* had been also in favor of American humanitarian interventionism.

"The Unipolar Moment" theory became an important inspiration for neo-conservative hegemonism – Joshua Muravchik, William Kristol (son of Irving Kristol) and Robert Kagan,[10] who shaped the vision of American benevolent hegemony. The new neo-conservative doctrine of American supremacy was based on military potential, interventionism and a dose of imperialism. Neo-conservative "benevolent hegemony" allows military solutions in order to preserve American global supremacy. Rejecting the theories of a limited American role in a multipolar system, Kagan and W. Kristol claimed that America was destined for global leadership (Kristol, Kagan 1997). Kagan, inspired by the style of Reagan's presidency, opposed political realism, describing it as a form of isolationism. Political realism left no space for "moral clarity," "moral impulse" and ideals in world politics – Kagan argued – while America won the Cold War because of the strength of its ideals, faith in democracy and free market (Kagan 1994). Hegemonists considered American supremacy a chance to spread the best political and economic system worldwide, which was supposed to benefit all nations, not only Americans.

Another "benevolent hegemony" proponent was Joshua Muravchik – a former socialist, who became an analyst at the American Enterprise Institute and a columnist for *The Commentary*.[11] Muravchik emphasized the role of ideology in U.S. foreign policy, being a follower of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's concept of using liberalism and democracy propaganda as a weapon against America's enemies. In particular, Muravchik supported the doctrine of democracy promotion and peaceful implementation of the American model worldwide, arguing that the efficiency of a hegemonic doctrine had already been confirmed by examples of democratic transition in Germany and Japan. This policy was supposed to achieve global success by gentle persuasion and "soft power" such as diplomacy, investments, grants, media, cultural and scientific cooperation, claimed Muravchik. According to Muravchik, in following years an important role in that policy was to be played by existing U.S. agencies and specialized institutions such as USAID, NED, USIA (Muravchik 1991). As a hegemonic unilateralist, Muravchik also questioned the global role of the UN and other international peace-keeping organizations, demanding the rapid growth of U.S. military expenses (Muravchik 1996).

2.

In the mid-1990s the influence of the new generation of neo-conservatives, following the vision of "Unipolar Moment" and promoting American global hegemony, began to grow. The unilateralist and hegemonic neoconservative agenda was shaped by members of the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) – an influential lobbyist group, founded in 1997 by William Kristol and Robert Kagan. PNAC's statement of principles was signed by Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz,

[10] In the years of Reagan's presidency Robert Kagan was Elliot Abrams's cooperative in the State Department; in 1985–1988 he served as an assistant for Inter-American relations.

[11] In the 1970s Muravchik was a member of the Coalition for Democratic Majority and Henry Jackson's ring; in the early 1990s he was still a Democrat, as one of the last neo-conservatives.

Jeb Bush, Norman Podhoretz, Elliot Abrams and Francis Fukuyama. The leaders of the hegemonic neo-conservatives' organization tried to influence Clinton's administration by open letters, urging to push more decisive actions in Yugoslavia and to protect Taiwan. An important role in the post-Cold War neo-conservative offensive was also played by *The Weekly Standard*, founded by William Kristol in 1995.[12] W. Kristol and Robert Kagan have been using the *Weekly Standard* to promote their vision of foreign policy, especially the plan to remove Saddam Hussein (Wolfowitz, Khalilzad 1997).

PNAC's analyses promoted the doctrine of unilateralism combined with the conviction that an increase of military expenses was essential to U.S. national security. An important PNAC document titled *Rebuilding America's Defenses. Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century* from 2000 aimed at persuading the presidential candidates to raise military expenses. The authors of the report claimed that erosion of America's military power – as a result of a gradual decrease of military expenses since 1990 – was a direct threat to *Pax Americana* and America's geopolitical leadership (Kagan, Schmitt, Donelly 2000).

As Robert Kagan pointed out, after the end of the Cold War certain countries, which were previously controlled by the two superpowers, moved to the twilight zone, beyond the borders of the new international system. As Kagan argued, these "rogue states" – e.g. Iraq and North Korea – caused numerous threats to the security of the United States and its allies because they had weapons of mass destruction and were capable of using them. The two existing methods of limiting those threats – non-proliferation agreements and unilateral military actions performed to destroy such weapons were in Kagan's judgment unsatisfactory. The only effective way for the U.S. to solve this fundamental security challenge was to build a missile defense system, prohibited by the ABM treaty.[13]. Kagan argued that this agreement, unnecessarily respected by the Clinton administration, was archaic in the post-Cold War reality, while the reduced Soviet strategic arsenal no longer caused the danger of Mutual Assured Destruction. Therefore, the missile defense system would not cause another arms race; but it would protect the U.S. from the blackmail of rogue states (Kagan, Schmitt 1998).

During the presidential campaign of 2000, Paul Wolfowitz[14] argued that America's previous success against totalitarian regimes had been based on the policy of promoting democracy and human rights. The continuation of this policy was essential to further success in world politics, as Wolfowitz claimed, because democracy promotion weakened America's ideological enemies and strengthened its allies, e.g.

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[12] *The Weekly Standard* (a weekly) is focused on internal politics, international affairs and culture. Founded in 1995 by William Kristol, John Podhoretz and Fred Barnes; belongs to Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Its contributors are associated with the Project for the New American Century and the American Enterprise Institute. *The Weekly Standard* represents advocacy journalism, its opinions are rather subjective. The weekly was considered the most important voice of the neo-conservatives with a circulation of about 80,000 copies per week. See www.weeklystandard.com.

[13] Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, signed in 1972.

[14] Paul Wolfowitz joined G.W. Bush's staff during the campaign, as one of the Vulcans team. The Vulcans Condoleeza Rice, Richard Perle, Robert Blackwill, Stephen Hadley and Richard Armitage – were a group of foreign policy advisors to George W Bush.

Taiwan and South Korea. Nevertheless, Wolfowitz opposed direct interventionism and nation-building projects, considering them too risky. Neo-conservative hawk presented himself as a proponent of a restrained security policy based on allied engagement in solving local and regional crises. It is better to equip others such as Iraqi, to fight for themselves, than send Americans to fight for them, Wolfowitz concluded (Wolfowitz 2000).

However, the priorities of the American security policy formed in early 2000 by Condoleezza Rice (the future National Security Advisor and Secretary of State in G.W. Bush's administration) were only to some extent similar to Wolfowitz's. Rice held a realist position, describing the international environment in terms of competition between key players, trying to accommodate to the new, changing challenges of the post-Cold War era. According to Rice, the main problem of U.S. foreign policy was naive Wilsonian idealism, which caused the unnecessary replacement of pure national interest by the unclear concept of the interest of the international community; noble ideals should not replace base political realism, Rice claimed (Rice 2000).

3.

After the successful campaign of George W. Bush, the neo-conservative view of foreign before September 11th, though, Bush's administration made some important reorientations of U.S. foreign policy, especially in withdrawing support for the Kyoto protocol, and abandoning the ABM treaty. It was clear that the multilateralism of Clinton's presidency was over, but the decisive shift in U.S. foreign policy did not occur until September 11th (Daalder, Lindsay 2005: 80–90).

In the first period of G.W. Bush's presidency the hegemonists were counterbalanced by Colin Powell and his staff – Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and Richard N. Haas – director of policy planning for the U.S. Department of State. Haas's neo-realist foreign policy concept similar in many points to *The National Interest* columnist's analyses – was known as the *Regulation Doctrine*. According to Haas, U.S. foreign policy should be focused on interstate relations, including humanitarian issues and democracy promotion. In his view, the human rights issues must not harm the main principle of American global strategy, which was a regulated world order; in some cases the issue of human rights abuse should be subordinated to the goal of maintaining good relations with important partners (Haas 1997).

As some analysts argue, hegemonic neo-conservatives dominated the foreign policy of the Bush administration after September 11th, while the president had no knowledge or vision of international relations (Szymborski 2004: 73). Others claim that the decisions of the Bush administration were based on the president's own vision and ideals, which were only strengthened by the terrorists (Daalder, Lindsay 2005: 153–155). Notably, the priorities and rhetoric of the Bush administration dramatically changed after September 11th and to some extent – the Bush cabinet followed the neo-conservative view on the matters of global security, especially the doctrine of Project for the New American Century. The presidential address from January 29th, 2002 recognized a new kind of threat – a combination of three factors:

weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and "rogue state" regimes (Bush 2002). The National Security Strategy from September 2002, which included the main points of Bush's antiterrorist campaign, claimed that America was ready to take unilateral preemptive action, add a new element to American security doctrines; a preemptive war became a tool of U.S. international policy (NSC 2002). At the time of the proclamation of the American preemptive strike doctrine the preparations to invade Iraq were already in progress. According to the neo-conservative officials of the Bush administration, the strike on Iraq was supposed to be just a second phase of the war on terror (Daalder, Lindsay 2005: 165).

CONCLUSIONS

During more than a thirty-year history of the neo-conservative circle, its members have not developed a single, unified doctrine of global policy. Since the 1970s the neo-conservative vision of U.S. foreign policy has evolved, responding to changes in the international environment. After the fall of the Soviet bloc neo-conservatives started to form a new vision of international strategy, which led to the unilateralist doctrine of benevolent hegemony. While the new interventionist American national security strategy of the first Bush administration remained closely related with PNAC analyses and Paul Wolfowitz's concepts of rebuilding the Middle East, the growing dissent about U.S. foreign policy after the growth of terrorist activity and ethnic clashes in Iraq raised strong criticism of the neo-conservative agenda. The judgment of American intervention in Iraq remains a key point, which distinguishes neo-conservatives from their opponents. The unclear future of the Middle East conflict was the reason for Francis Fukuyama to leave the main neo-conservative circle, while Norman Podhoretz and other leading neo-conservatives – especially William Kristol – defended Bush's foreign policy. The failure of neo-conservative hegemonic ambitions does not mean the end of the neo-conservative circle. The neo-conservative hawks are still promoting the interventionist policy and the new doctrine of combating Islamic fascism, formed by Norman Podhoretz.

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